WHIRRAKEE

March 2009 Vol. 30 No. 2

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MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE BENDIGO

FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB

Bendigo Field Naturalists Club Inc.
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Membership of the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club is open to all those interested in Natural History. The subscription rates are: Single $34; Family $40; Concession: Single $28.50; Family $34. *Whirrakee* subscription only is $34.

General meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month. The venue for General meetings is the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, Old High Street, Golden Square. The meeting starts with a 10 minute 'thing-of-the night' natural history segment. The invited speaker starts at 8:00pm and meetings conclude with supper. The Annual Meeting is held in September.

Committee meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 6:30pm. Members of the Committee are the Office Bearer listed above and the following members: Bob Ruddick, Ben Goonan, Liz Graham, Diana Collier. *More committee members are urgently sought, contact the secretary, if interested.*

Excursions are conducted regularly and are advertised on the diary page of the *Whirrakee*. The assembly point for excursions is the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, unless otherwise specified. Several interclub field naturalist campouts are held every year.

The Bendigo Field Naturalists Club has one sub-group (the Fauna Study Group) and is actively involved in local conservation issues. An **indigenous garden** has been established around the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building. Working bees are advertised on the *Whirrakee* diary page.

Fauna Study Group: meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 7:30pm in the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building.

Chairman: John Burtonclay, Fadersons Lane, Mandurang (5439 5710)
Secretary: Bill Holsworth, 13 Nabilla Crs., Bendigo (5443 4063)
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Bird Observing: Club members conduct regular bird surveys. Please contact Anne Bridley 5449 3479 or Glenise Moors 5439 6254 for details. Special bird observations should be reported to Anne Bridley 5449 3479.
To propose bird observing excursions please contact Kerrie Norris 5447 8017.

Front cover photo?...see page 2.

WHIRRAKEE

Monthly Newsletter of the Bendigo Field Naturalist Club

Vol. 30, No. 2, March 2009

Whirrakee takes its name from the Whirrakee Wattle (*Acacia williamsonii*) which is virtually endemic to the Bendigo region

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Authors are responsible for the accuracy of the information they use and also for any opinions expressed in their articles. Contributions will be included as soon as possible after they are received, although articles received more than one week after the monthly General Meeting will probably be too late for inclusion in the next issue of *Whirrakee*.

Articles in *Whirrakee* may be reproduced, but permission should be obtained from the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club, and acknowledgment should be given to the author and the Club. Some back issues are still available on request.

Editor's Note

What a great edition, full of the real field-natty type of material we all love. Everybody had a story after the many hot days we experienced at the end of January, and at the first general meeting of the year, Glenise and Jan had the good idea to collect these stories that tell something about unusual animal behaviour. It is very interesting what happens to animal's normal levels of caution under extreme conditions! Also, some people might be surprised to see Darren Green publish on sundews – what else has he got up his sleeve?

Because of all the fantastic contributions, I had to hold off the summary of last month's talk – a nice position to be in. If space permits, it will appear next month.

Lastly, have a look at the options paper about the new Bendigo Botanic Gardens; page 3 will give you the address where you can make a contributions to this unique project of the City of Greater Bendigo.

Front Page Illustration – Photographer: Darren Green

Not unlike the phoenix out of the ashes, this little sundew, *Drosera macrantha planchonii*, flowers in seemingly inhospitable conditions. The flowers of most sundews seem large and delicate. One idea to explain their size, is that they protect insects which may act as pollinators from being eaten instead of carrying away the pollen! Testing this theory would be challenging, but very interesting.

Short notices

Do you have a **red sticker on your *Whirrakee*** ? - your membership is due.

According to the club's constitution, memberships are due by Sep 01 each year, payable in advance for the coming financial year. This year a large number of our members have not yet paid their subscriptions for 2008/2009.

If you have received a red sticker and you have already paid, please contact Anne Bridley on 5449 3479.

March General Meeting – Preview
Presenter: Richard Hughes
The Wilderness Society Victoria

Title: The emergence of large scale nature conservation projects - a west Victorian perspective
Outline: Bold, strategic landscape-scale initiatives are required to address the complex challenges facing Australia's natural landscapes including climate change, loss of biodiversity, salinity, reduced water quality and weeds.
One such initiative, Habitat 141, is being developed in far western Victoria. Stretching more than 500km from Portland to Mildura and beyond, this initiative aims to protect, restore and reconnect the distinct landscapes that straddle the Victorian, South Australian and New South Wales borders.
The Habitat 141 experience may help inform the development of similar initiatives elsewhere.

Option paper for Bendigo Botanic Gardens released
For your chance to make a submission about the future of the Bendigo Botanic Gardens (submissions close 20th March), go to:
http://www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/Page/page.asp?Page_Id=2815&h=0

More information.....from Clive Fisher

...on the interesting moth photographed by Clive and pictured in the December Whirrakee:
'It was pure white and the stripe was brown. I think this species may have a symbiotic relationship with the Cootamundra wattle, because it walked a long way past my white ironbark to get to the wattle.'

...on the 'tiger tales' also published in the December Whirrakee:
'The sighting was on February 3, 2005. Klaus Emmerichs showed Col Bailey the exact spot of the encounter. Klaus said the images are blurry, because he used a function called night vision which simulates a slow shutter speed and allows pictures to be taken without flash in poor light. Another reason that people are suspicious about the photos is that the picture before the thylacine ones shows JAN for January, whereas the tiger ones showed 2 for the second month. Klaus explained that by saying that Birgit changed the format on the plane to Tasmania…
…let's not forget, for 60 years the giant panda was believed extinct.'

Congratulations to Ern Perkins for being awarded the Australian Natural History medallion by the Field Naturalist Club of Victoria (FNCV).

February 'Thing of the Night'

Summarised by Jan Orr

At the last General Meeting held on 11.2.2009 there was a departure from the usual 'Thing of the Night' procedure and members were handed sheets of paper to write down their observations about how plants and animals near where they lived coped with the unprecedented high temperatures of the last 2 and a half weeks. The following are some of the things the members observed.

Glenise Moors, Sedgwick
On the 29.1.2009 Eastern Rosellas bathed under the sprinklers that were on in the enclosure around our Bendigo Waxflower, and there were Grey Fantails, and Pardalotes in the fernery.
On the 30.1.2009 while watering pot-plants in a semi-shaded area, I noticed a sick Ringtail Possum and I wondered if it was sick from eating my 4 saltbush pot plants or if it was sick from the heat? I gently squirted it with the hose to cool it down. Birds came into the edge of the enclosure to drink from the puddles I had made and to be splashed by the hose. There were 2 Scarlet Robins (a female and a moulting male), a young Striated Pardalote, 4 Spotted Pardalotes (these sipped drops of water from the camellia leaves), a male Eastern Spinebill, a Striated Thornbill and 12 Fuscous Honeyeaters.

On the 31.1.2009 the Ringtail Possum in the fernery was even sicker, it was now very lethargic and showed no interest in the apple I offered it to eat.
On the 1.2.2009 I checked my 4 mammal boxes and found them all empty, even the Sugar Gliders had gone.

On the 6.2.2009 a Magpie stayed in the shade for most of the day on the south side of the house, close to the back door.
On the even hotter day of the 7.2.2009 there were 6 magpies near the back door under a rack of pot plants.

Annette and Crawford Mouat, Mandurang
Magpies and Eastern Rosellas were sharing the birdbath. Usually the rosellas wait for the magpies to leave. We had 2 of each sharing the birdbath with open beaks and spread wings.
We had 3 Grey Currawongs sitting under a Correa outside our south facing bedroom window and they were squawking quite loudly. Usually they are quiet and do not come so close to the house. Crawford put a fine misty sprinkler under 2 Grevilleas and many small birds came and hung in the tree with their wings spread like bats, looking very unusual.
Lots of tiny birds: fantails, wrens, pardalotes, thornbills, New-holland Honeyeaters and Yellow-faced Honeyeaters sheltered in the fernery. It was like a busy aviary.

Peter Ellis, Flora Hill
On Saturday 7th, Magpies with beaks wide open were at the door of my side veranda, which is the coolest shady spot of the house. There are pot plants and a bucket of water there as well.
During the earlier week of above 40 degree temperatures, the Magpies arrived when I was watering the garden.
Somebody told me how possums came down and begged for water.

Elaine Doling, California Gully
Tawny Frogmouths have been drinking from the birdbaths and there are extra magpies visiting her yard (other than the resident family).
Blue-faced Honeyeaters seem to have gone away in the last week. They are usually resident in her yard.
Rosellas in the nest box appear to be breeding again. They have been kicking up a fuss over strangers over the last 2 days.

Jane Cleary, Epsom
Early Saturday morning while watering the garden a young Magpie was under my feet and liable to be trodden upon. Since Saturday, there have been fewer birds at the water that has been put out for the birds. We need observations over a longer term for better understanding.
For the first time in some years, the Willy Wagtails at Jane's house, have managed to raise a family. This year the Grey Currawongs were absent.
Australasian Grebe have bred at the lagoon in the White Hills Botanic Gardens this year. The island in the lagoon was planted with locally indigenous riparian plant species 2 years ago, and the lagoon now receives run-off storm water from the nearby streets so it has a small amount of good quality water. This is the first time in recent years that the grebes have nested there.

Anne Bridley, Junortoun
In the week preceding 2.2.2009 these birds have been seen at Junortoun:
- Dusky Woodswallow with two dependent flying young
- Weebill with two young not long out of the nest
- Crested Pigeon sitting on nest

On Sunday, the day of the cool change, the Fuscous Honeyeaters and Striated Honeyeaters were very active at the water dish. I was so glad to see that they had survived the previous day.

Pam Land, Neilborough
On the very hot days, several small birds came in to shelter on our veranda. There were three juvenile Red-capped Robins, up to 20 Striated Pardalotes, a Willy Wagtail, a grey Shrike Thrush and a Jacky Winter. They were just sitting on the concrete with their wings out and their beaks open. They looked very thin and small. The Pardalotes hid between the fire buckets and the house. Only on the very hottest days did we see these birds on our veranda.
We also have noticed that the Green Mallees are covered with lerps which seem to be a great food source for hundreds of White-browed Woodswallows and a few Masked Woodswallows.

Matthew Comer, Kangaroo Flat
Various birds frequently visited the water bowls I had put out in garden. There were Spotted Pardalotes, Striated Pardalotes which were sheltering close to the ground in the shade of the house, White-plumed Honeyeaters, New Holland Honeyeaters, Red Wattlebirds, a Magpie Lark, Eastern Rosellas including a juvenile with 'cinnamon' wing markings, Silvereyes, a Yellow-tufted Honeyeater which is a 1st recording for this address, wrens, Magpies and a Buff-banded Rail, (as reported at the December meeting.)
One of these rails has been observed at the water bowl since the creek has dried up.
A juvenile Red Wattlebird was observed to sit in the water bowl for about an hour and its parent was seen feeding water to it.

Gemma Candy, Maiden Gully
In Maiden Gully on 7.2.2009 (before the fire) there were:
- Lots of Magpies right up next to the house. This has not happened before.
- A Willy Wagtail was on a beam under the eaves at the at the back door. It was making a lot of noise.
- White-plumed Honeyeaters were under bushes in the shade.

At 5:30 pm a Tawny Frogmouth was seen flying out of the bush near Albert St. Maiden Gully fleeing the fire.
During the heat wave I noticed a number of Huntsman Spiders both at home in Maiden Gully and at work at Mandurang.

Diana Collier, North Bendigo
I saw no birds around my house on Saturday and only a few on Friday. On Saturday it was 52 degrees at the back of my house - in the shade! But once it was cooler, the Magpies, Little Ravens and small birds and many parrots (probably lorikeets) could be heard in the high tops of the trees.

Joy Clusker, Spring Gully
Three White-eared Honeyeaters came up to the back door at my mothers house in Spring Gully a couple of times a day to get water in the shade and didn't fly off when we joined them. They're normally timid.

Bill Holsworth, Strathfieldsaye
A bat, *Chalinolobus gouldii,* was found in Tom Burton's rain gauge. (Which of course contained no water.) The bat got stuck in there and had been there for some days before it was found. It was severely injured as it had damaged one wing, which had dried out so the bat was put down. The body was kept in the fridge and I have now made a study skin from it.
On 7.2.2009, after the fire I found a dead Blackbird at Victoria Hill.

John Lindner, Goldleaf Crt. Huntly
A Willy Wagtail, the first ever seen by me at this location, was observed briefly in the evening in early February (3rd - 5th). It has not been seen since.

Magpies clustered around the veranda on the south side of the house on the very hot days in early February.

Lyn Hamilton, Kangaroo Flat
Grey Currawongs and crows (ravens) usually squabble for territory in the tree near the birdbath. There was no confrontation during the heat. they just drank, bathed and stood in the shade.
Kangaroo dung was found on one tiny patch of green in a garden two doors up from us. The kangaroos must be getting desperate.

Bev Culvenor, Kennington
The Magpies came in close when I was watering and all my Silvereyes, Yellow Thornbills, Striated Thornbills, Yellow-rumped Thornbills, New Holland Honeyeaters and Superb Fairy Wrens have disappeared. Probably because the big ginger cat from the units over the back finds my garden shady and comes and sits at the base of my birdbath.

Margaret Kane, Flora Hill
Even after watering, nearly all the leaves on my grape vines fell off. So I cut off the grapes so the vine had enough fluid to survive.
Last year I bought a European Wasp trap from Bushes Stores. I baited it with some ox liver and the wasps were greatly attracted to it and I was able to eradicate them from my garden. I haven't seen any European Wasps this year.

Jan Orr, Kennington
On 1.2.2009 at about 7:30 am, Rod and I saw a Spotted Crake at Kennington Reservoir. It was feeding on mud flats near a small patch of Cumbungi. In an effort to re-establish the Cumbungi in the lake small patches were planted and fenced with wire netting to exclude the moorhens and swamphens, but fortunately the crake is small enough to fit through the mesh.
The Dusky Moorhens have chicks at the moment. They built their nest out of fallen redgum bark instead of Cumbungi leaves like they have used in the past.

Rod Orr, Kennington
Our Striated Pardalotes behaved in much the same way as others had noticed - on the hottest days they sat close to the house, low down and in the shade but with their beaks gaping, so I put a bucket of cold water close to them and walked away. They flew to it immediately, sat on the rim and drank. They stayed nearby all day, down low and close to the water. They were very quiet on Sunday morning but seemed to be back in their usual numbers by Monday although they were still very quiet, perhaps shocked?

Striated Pardalotes and Silvereyes
The Silvereyes started visiting our fig tree a week or so ago, optimistically! Most leaves have already fallen - the tree seems to be anticipating a very early Autumn. The figs are very small and dry and many are shrivelling rather than ripening properly. Still, the Silvereyes are starting to eat into any of the larger unripe but ripening figs.
I noticed a pair of Striated Pardalotes following them around through the tree trying to copy what they were doing but without really understanding what the Silvereyes were eating. Of course, the Silvereyes think that our fig tree is really theirs, so they are not impressed by the presence of the Pardalotes and regularly buzz them off.
After about 2 weeks of this activity, the Pardalotes still haven't worked it out although they are finding plenty of small insects to catch while they are following the Silvereyes, so they are not going unrewarded. The Silvereyes are much more flexible in their tastes and manage a well balanced diet of insects and figs but the Pardalotes seem to be almost entirely insectivorous and certainly don't understand figs (or Silvereyes?) at all.

...and here is one other hot weather observation, sent in by Gayle Osborne
A Woodvale resident reported to Ian Magee, that on 7 February, Sugar Gliders left the Box Iron Bark Forest adjacent to her house and glided into the dam to drink progressively from 3pm.

Carnivorous Plants of the Bendigo District
by Darren Green

Preface
For those of you that know me, or have read some of the articles I have written for *Whirrakee*, you will know my forte is reptiles. But there is another side to this author that is not promoted to the general public. Reptiles seem to be a front for this naturalist, who emphatically denies knowing anything about birds, and jokes about botanists being "salad scientists". The truth is not always what it seems, and alas my hidden interests are starting to appear. I try to justify my passion with reptiles and interest in plants through parallel patterns, namely carnivory. Hence I am writing about carnivorous plants. In this article, I tell of some of my observations of the carnivorous plants in the Bendigo district. In doing this, I leave little room in the pages of *Whirrakee* for birds (LOL). I also hope to encourage others to fill in some gaps about what we know about these wonderful plants and send them into *Whirakee* for publication.

Introduction
Carnivorous plants are also known as insectivorous plants. They are a group of plants that live in areas of low fertility and gain their nutrients mostly through invertebrates, and on occasion, vertebrates. Some of the spectacular *Nepenthes* of Borneo, have been known to trap and "digest" small mammals. Due to this adaptation to carnivory, many myths have arisen, and been popularized through film and literature. Books like "*The Day of the Triffids*" and the film "*Little Shop of Horrors*" come to mind. Carnivorous plants have also been popularized through the sale of live plants in nurseries.
Australia is host to several types of carnivorous plants. These are:

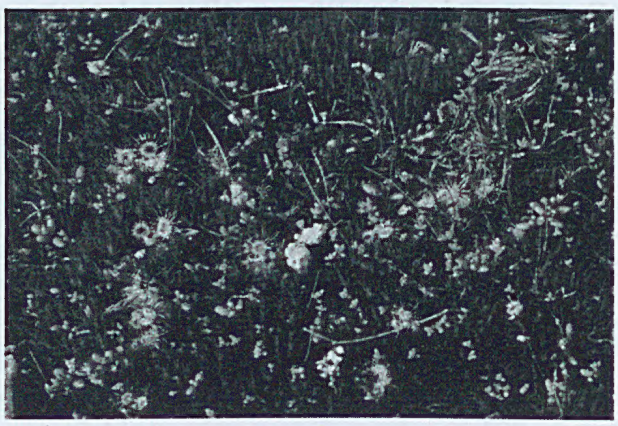
- *Aldrovanda* water wheel plant
- *Byblis* the rainbow plant
- *Cephalotus* the Western Australia or Albany pitcher plant
- *Drosera* the sundews
- *Nepenthes* of Cape York Peninsula
- *Utricularia* bladderwort

The sundews belong in the family *Droseraceae*, and genus *Drosera*. These have the characteristic sticky drops on their leaves that trap insects, much like fly paper. Sundews are the only carnivorous plants found in the Bendigo district. They are:

- *Drosera glanduligera*
- *Drosera macrantha planchonii*
- *Drosera auriculata*
- *Drosera whittakeri aberrans*

Scarlet Sundew (*Drosera glanduligera*)
D. glanduligera is a golden green fibrous-rooted ephemeral plant forming a flat compact rosette of leaves up to 40mm in diameter. For a detailed description see Lowrie (1989).

Metallic orange flowers are produced from August to October, with the plant carrying over to the next growing season by seed. Lowrie (1989) describes the growing habitat as all soil types, sand, sandy clay, peaty sand, loam and sandstone soils in wet seepage areas. *D. glanduligera* emerges in August as a tiny replica of the adult plant. It is often found in open areas with other low growing plants such as mosses.



This is the smallest *Drosera* species in the Bendigo district. Due to its size it can be hard to find, and crawling around on one's hands and knees is the best method to find them. I have seen them at Maiden Gully and Melville Caves (Kooyoora). The best place to observe them is at Melville Caves. Here I commonly find them in the moss beds that cover granite slabs. These areas are seepage areas and are wet to damp in winter and spring. They are, however, common and well scattered throughout the park.

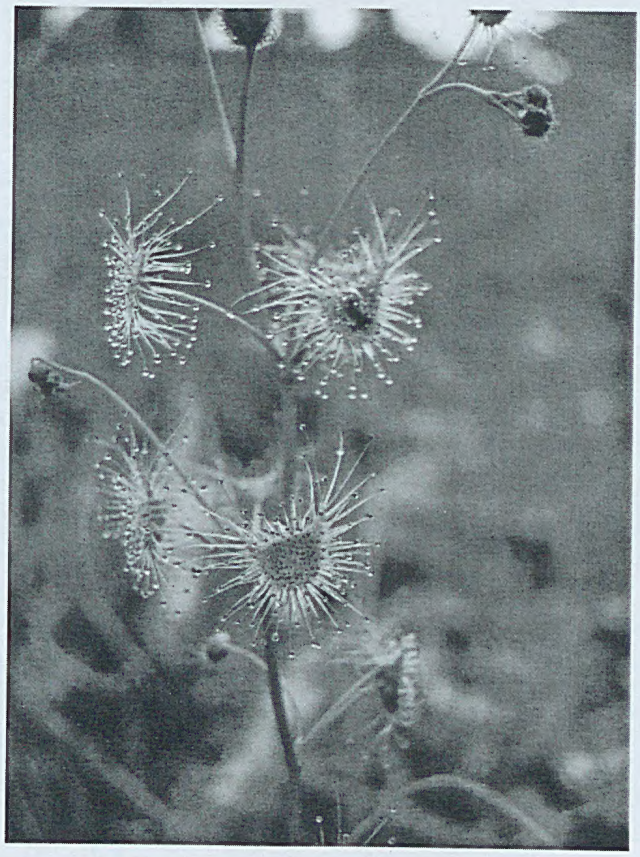
Climbing Sundew (*Drosera macrantha planchonii*)

This sundew is a climbing, perennial tuberous plant that trails over and through small bushes. It commonly grows to around 300mm in length around Bendigo, although Lowrie (1998) sates it may attain up to 600mm. For a detail description refer to Lowrie (1998). White flowers are produced between August and October. It becomes dormant, surviving as a tuber, during the dry months. Lowrie (1998) describes the habitat as shrubland with heath understorey.

This common species probably occurs throughout the district. I have seen them at Whipstick, Maiden Gully, Diamond Hill, One Tree Hill, and Big Hill. The best place to see them is at Salomon Gully Flora Reserve. They can be hard to see at first, as the stem is very thin, so look for the small bell shaped leaves. Small plants up to 100mm are self-supporting, but anything larger needs the support of a neighbouring plant.

Tall Sundew (*Drosera auriculata*)

Cleary & Leamon (1989) in the *Wildflowers of Bendigo*, refer to this sundew as a subspecies, *Drosera peltata auriculata*. Lowrie (1998) refers to it as a species, *Drosera auriculata*, which I have used here. It is an erect, glabrous, perennial tuberous plant, often branching at the top, with or without a basal rosette of leaves. For a detailed description refer to Lowrie (1998). This sundew is dormant in summer, surviving the dry as an underground tuber.



D. auriculata emerges from its tuber in June and initially appears as a rosette. By the end of August, an erect stem up to 200mm tall is visible, and the basal rosette may have since died back. Flowering begins in October and each plant bears pale pink or white flowers. While *D. auriculata* may grow in conjunction with other *Drosera*, they are also found in open grassed areas where other sundews do not grow.

This common species probably occurs throughout the district. I have seen them at Melville Caves (Kooyoora), Whipstick, Maiden Gully, Diamond Hill, Big Hill, and Mount Alexander. The best places to see them

are at Melville Caves on the moss beds covering granite slabs, where they are at the highest density, although they do occur throughout this area. At Big Hill they are easily found in damp gullies in open areas, especially along watercourses such as water-races or on the seepage side of dams.

D. auriculata has pale pink flowers

Scented Sundew (*Drosera whittakeri aberrans*)

Cleary & Leamon (1989) in the *Wildflowers of Bendigo*, refer to this sundew as a species, *Drosera whittakeri*. Lowrie (1998) refers to it as a subspecies, *Drosera whittakeri aberrans*, which I have used here. It is a rosetted, perennial tuberous plant attaining up to 40mm in diameter. It is able to produce additional tubers by underground and surface adventitious stolons to form compact plant colonies (Lowrie 1998). In open areas, particularly disturbed areas like the side of tracks, the communities appear as green and red carpets. White flowers on short stems are produced in August-September. Like other tuberous sundews, they are dormant over the dry months.

D. whittakeri aberrans is the first of the sundews to appear, usually about two weeks after the first pre-winter rains, namely towards the end of May. This species grows in clumps, generally near the base of the granite rocks and along water courses, often making it difficult not to step on the plants. They grow in the open typically amongst mosses, and often alongside *D. auriculata* and *D. glanduligera.* You can also find them hidden under shrubs.

These plants also vary considerably in colour, even over a short distance. The plants I have seen have been green, green with a red edge, red or pink, orange and even a deep burgundy colour. Originally I believed that green leaves turned red in the sunlight, however this is not always true. The green forms are noticed to be growing in the drier soils while burgundy forms seem to grow in the wetter moss covered crevices between granite rocks. The burgundy colouration of *D.whittakeri aberrans* is quite spectacular and a number of theories for the cause have been considered by the author, however no work has yet been done to test the truth of these. Some thoughts are:

- They are in full sunlight, as mentioned above, which causes them to turn burgundy.
- The crevices where the burgundy form occurs are also a natural path for water run-off.
- Leached minerals from the granite rocks.
- The constant trickle of water over the tuber and root system, keeping the roots cool (similar to *Darlingtonia californica* in the USA) may also be beneficial.
- A combination of all the above.

This is perhaps the most common sundew in the Bendigo area, and probably occurs throughout the entire district. I have seen them at Melville Caves (Kooyoora), Whipstick, Maiden Gully, Diamond Hill, Big Hill, Mount Alexander. The best place to see them are at Melville Caves on the moss beds covering granite slabs, where they are at the

highest density, although they do occur throughout this area. Another good spot is Salomon Gully Flora Reserve and Faugh-A-Ballaugh (Diamond Hill). Keep to the tracks, you will see mats of them.

Nearby Carnivorous Plants

A number of carnivorous plants are found just outside the Bendigo district. I have included them here, as further investigations may show that they may, or may not, occur in our district. I encourage everyone to keep an eye out and record your findings in *Whirrakee* so that we may get a better understanding of the plants in our area. As many of you know, the past five years I have been living in north Queensland, so I am relying on you to find out for me. These plants are:

- *Drosera spatulata*
- *Drosera pygmaea*
- *Utricularia beaugleholei*

A full description of these plants are given in Lowrie (1989 & 1998). *Utricularia beaugleholei* is a perennial terrestrial plant with small narrow leaves. The flower is a distinguishing feature. Its insect traps are found on the roots, and are usually not seen without digging them up. According to Lowrie (1998), in Victoria, this species grows in shallow water in sand and clay soils on the margins of swamps, roadside drains and on seasonally wet flood plains (Lowrie 1998).

Other Victorian species

Other Victorian species of carnivorous plants include:

- *Drosera arcturi*
- *Drosera binata*
- *Drosera indica*
- *Utricularia dichotoma*
- *Utricularia gibba*
- *Utricularia lateriflora*
- *Utricularia tenella*
- *Utricularia violacea*

End note

While there are many places to look for carnivorous plants, Kooyoora State Park is one of my favourite spots to get on my hands and knees and do the "carnivorous plant shuffle". It is at its best during late winter and spring. Often places like this, where *Drosera* grow, may experience little rain. Here they probably gain the bulk of the water they need to survive through frost melts and fog. However, even though the ground appears dry at times, and most of the mosses are dead, closer inspection reveals that the soil was still moist and there appears to be no obvious detrimental effect to the *Drosera*. As summer approached the plants dry up and look as if they are dead. Australian fauna and flora is well adapted to seasons or even years of drought, and at this time the *Drosera* remains as dormant tubers or seed, waiting until the next winter rains.

Sundews are efficient in attracting, capturing, restraining and digesting insect prey. According to Lowrie (1998), there is one insect, however, that avoids becoming a victim. This is *Setocoris*, the sundew bug, which is a type of assassin bug. Sundew bugs consume the prey the host plant has caught. They are able to move around the plant without being caught themselves. According to Lowrie (1998), these bugs are alert and hide amongst the leaves the moment they sense danger. The underside of leaves on rosetted plants provide good shelter.

References

Cleary, J. & Leamon, E. (1989) *Wildflowers of Bendigo*, Bendigo Field Naturalists Club: Bendigo.

Lowrie, A. (1989) *Carnivorous Plants of Australia: Volume 2*, University of Western Australia Press: Nedlands WA.

Lowrie, A. (1998) *Carnivorous Plants of Australia: Volume 3*, University of Western Australia Press: Nedlands WA.

Diary

The General, Bird Observers Group and Fauna Study Group meetings are held at the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, Old High Street, Golden Square, unless otherwise indicated.

General Meetings

Wednesday, March 11 **7.30pm**
The speaker, Richard Hughes, will talk about 'The emergence of large scale nature conservation projects - a West Victorian perspective'. For a preview, see page 3.

Wednesday, April 8 **7.30pm**
Alan Yen will speak about the 'Bugs around Bendigo, and whether we should eat them'

Excursions
Contact Richard Goonan if you have any comments, questions or suggestions for excursions (ph 0423418815).

Fauna Group
This group normally meets (in the clubrooms) on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 7.30pm. However, the next meeting is (again) held out of doors. New and seasoned Club members most welcome to attend.

Wed. 25th March - Meet at Crusoe Res. No 7 picnic ground for nature walk, talk, watch and listen. 7-9pm. Binoculars recommended plus clothing suitable to weather and sturdy footwear. Chair and thermos may also be handy. Contact Kerrie **Ph. 54478017**

Regular Fauna Excursions
Every Friday morning starting at around 9 to 9:30, the Fauna Group inspects nest boxes in the Spring Gully area. The excursions are led by Maurie Lewis, 16 Vains St. Golden Square. Phone 0407 427 179 or 5442 1813. Phone Maurie to confirm exact departure times and location. If you don't phone but go directly to Maurie's house and find nobody at the house between 9 and 9:30 then the excursion is not on.

Wildlife Rescue & Information Network Inc.
W.R.I.N. is an organisation dedicated to the care of orphaned, sick or injured native animals. It is fully endorsed by the Dept of Sustainability and Environment.
Please call our Emergency Number for Help for Fauna in Need. Phone: 0419 356433.

SEANA campout
Southcombe Lodge, Port Fairy
20-23rd March 2009
Host: Warrnambool FNC
contact: Liz Kenna 5568 4206 or Viv Bounds 5567 6257

Everyone is invited to the **Centre for Environmental Management's 2009 Research Seminar Series**, jointly conducted by University of Ballarat, (DSE), Wimmera Glenelg Hopkins Sustainability Research Network (WGC) and Corangamite and South West Integrated Flora and Fauna Team (SWIFFT).
The speaker at the seminar will be **Chris Tzaros** - "Managing a critically endangered species under conditions of extreme uncertainty: **Orange-bellied Parrots** on south-eastern mainland Australia"

Date: 6th March. 2009
Time: 12:00 - 1:30
Venue: F301, Mt Helen Campus, University of Ballarat

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see February *Whirrakee*, or, for even more information go to:
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http://asgap2009.apsvic.org.au/index.html